

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6504

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

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EO 11652: N/A

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SUBJECT: SENATE ELECTION CAMPAIGN UNDERWAY IN ISTANBUL

SUMMARY: MAIN CONTESTANTS FOR SINGLE VACANT SENATE SEAT ARE REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S AND JUSTICE PARTIES. CAMPAIGN PRESENTLY FOCUSSED ON JP CANDIDATE'S MILITARY ACTIVITIES DURING MARTIAL LAW YEAR. WHILE RPP IS FAVORITE, JP STANDING WILL BECOME MORE CLEAR WHEN PRIMIN HOLDS RALLY OCT 9. END SUMMARY.

1. THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN FOR THE OCT. 12 PARTIAL SENATE ELECTIONS IS CENTERING PRIMARILY ON CONTEST BETWEEN REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP), JUSTICE PARTY (JP) AND TO LESSER EXTENT NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY (NSP) FOR SINGLE SENATE VACANCY FROM ISTANBUL. (SEAT FELL VACANT UPON DEATH OF RPP SENATOR AYHAN PEKER EARLIER THIS YEAR.) SINCE ISTANBUL TRADITIONALLY RPP STRONGHOLD, OTHER PARTIES NEED STRONG CANDIDATES TO POSE SERIOUS CHALLENGE.

2. RPP CANDIDATE GESIM USTUNEL, PROF. OF ECONOMICS, BOGAZICI UNIVERSITY, IS POLITICAL NEWCOMER, BUT IS HIGHLY RESPECTED IN CENTER LEFT INTELLECTUAL AND LABOR CIRCLES. RPP CAMPAIGN, WHICH OPENED OFFICIALLY ON SEPT. 21, TO DATE HAS CONSISTED OF PERSONAL ATTACKS ON JP CHALLENGER, FORMER GENERAL FAIK TURUN. ALTHOUGH TURUN HAS REPUTATION AS MAN OF INTEGRITY, HIS ROLE AS ISTANBUL MARTIAL LAW

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COMMANDER DURING MOST VIOLENT "ANARCHIST" ACTIVITY OF 1971-72 EARNED

HIM LASTING ENMITY OF LEFT. PROMINENT LEFTISTS, INCLUDING JOURNALISTS ON CUMHURİYET AND MILLİYET, HAVE HELD TURUN RESPONSIBLE FOR ALLEGED TORTURE AND ABUSE OF PRISONERS DURING MARTIAL LAW ERA. RPP ISTANBUL PROVINCE LEADER KOTIL BRANDED TURUN AS "THE MASTER TORTURER OF THE FURNITURE-EXPORTING BROTHER'S FIRM" -- A REFERENCE TO ALLEGED EXPORT FRAUD BY PRİMİN DEMİREL'S NEPHEW. USTUNEL SAID TURUN HAD "MENTALITY WHICH WILL DRAG COUNTRY TO DISASTER". MEANWHILE, LEFTIST POLITICAL CARTOONS HAVE BEEN PROTRAYING TURUN'S GAUNT FEATURES AS A DEATH'S HEAD.

3. JP'S APPROACH IS TO REMAIN ALOOF FOR TIME BEING AT LEAST. LOCAL PARTY LEADER NUMAN UZUN TOLD US SEPT 22 THAT ORGANIZATION BELIEVES TURUN STRONG ENOUGH FIGURE TO OVERCOME ACCUSATIONS IN EYES OF PEOPLE. TURUN, WHO ALREADY EXPECTS VOTES OF BIG BUSINESS, WILL CONCENTRATE ON PROBLEMS OF GECEKONDU SHANTY-TOWN DWELLERS, WHERE RPP'S "BROKEN PROMISES" (E.G. LOW FOOD PRICES, TITLE TO GECEKONDU PROPERTY, IMPROVED SERVICES) ARE MOST BITTERLY FELT.

4. NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY (NSP) CANDIDATE KAZIM SAVAS IS POLITICALLY OBSCURE, CIVIL ENGINEER, WHO HAS DONE NO CAMPAIGNING SO FAR. NSP, HOWEVER, AT THIS STAGE IS MAKING ONLY TOKEN EFFORT SINCE PARTY HAS ALMOST NO POSSIBILITY OF SCORING VERY IMPRESSIVE SHOWING.

5. TO DATE THE ONLY INDICATOR OF RELATIVE POPULAR STANDING OF PARTIES HAS BEEN POLITICAL "MEETINGS" IN TAKSIM SQUARE. RPP CHAIRMAN ECEVİT'S VISIT ON JUNE 4 (ISTANBUL 2070) DREW MASSIVE CROWDS; NSP LEADER ERBAKAN ATTRACTED ONLY HANDFUL OF SPECTATORS SEPT. 10. (ISTANBUL 2955). REVOLUTIONARY TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION DISK, WHICH SUPPORTS RPP, ALSO MUSTERED IMPORESSIVE AUDIENCE SEPT. 20 (ISTANBUL 3107.) JP'S COMPARATIVE STANDING WILL BE EVIDENT OCT. 9, WHEN PRİMİN DEMİREL IS SCHEDULED TO ADDRESS TAKSIM GATHERING. SINCE JP WILL HAVE FIRST CRACK AT ELECTORATE IN FINAL ROUND OF SPEECHES, THE TURNOUT SHOULD GIVE GOOD INDICATION OF JP'S CHANCES AT POLLS ON OCT 12.

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